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# BROWN BAG DISCUSSION: PERFECTING THE ELEVATOR PITCH

November 4, 2011 by JoLynne Lyon



Have you ever been in an elevator and had someone ask you what you do for a living? That was the premise for the Brown Bag Luncheon held Thursday at the CPD.

Dr. Bryce Fifield presented this situation to CPD staff members, who then composed a 30-second “elevator speech” and shared it with the group. Group members gave the speech an instant score, followed with discussion about ways to improve the speech. Suggestions included:

- Lose the academic jargon. Terms we use daily in our individual positions often don’t translate well to others outside the field.
- Know your audience. The general public will need general information, while someone in your field will want more than a basic summary.
- Simplify, simplify, simplify! There’s no way to explain everything about the CPD in 30 seconds and probably not even everything about your job. This is one time that generalizations may be better.
- Let your passion and enthusiasm show. If you can share a personal anecdote about an individual or family that the CPD helped, all the better.